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DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

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NEW FORESTRY AID PROGRAM

The Honourable Hugh John Flemming, Minister of Forestry, announced today that a new and improved program of financial aid in forestry operations is being offered to the ten Provinces.

Under agreements presently in effect federal financial assistance is available to the Provinces until the end of March, 1962, for the conduct of forest inventories and reforestation, for the purchase of capital assets needed for forest fire protection, and for the construction of forest access roads. This aid has been provided under three separate agreements. The Federal Government has now offered to provide future assistance under a single agreement with a 50-50 sharing of costs for all approved activities except reforestation.

One additional type of activity will qualify for federal assistance, namely stand improvement operations. These include the felling of damaged and dead trees, the thinning of overly dense young stands, and similar measures intended to release the more promising trees from over-crowding and to encourage development of high quality timber. Experiments have shown that much can be done in this way to improve our forests, and work of this kind is particularly useful in providing so-called "off season" employment.

The Federal Government is offering a total amount of $7,910,000 for each of the next two years to be divided among the Provinces in proportion to their respective productive forest areas.

Those Provinces who wish to take advantage of the whole of their allotment will be asked to ensure that at least 40 per cent of the total amount will be spent on the construction of access roads. With the exception

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of this requirement, each Province will be free to distribute its expenditures among the approved activities previously mentioned in whatever way seems best suited to its own particular needs. Thus a measure of flexibility will be provided which has, to some degree, been lacking in the current series of agreements. Other detail changes have been made on the basis of past experience to ensure that both federal and provincial expenditures on these programs will be used to the best advantage. The Federal Government believes that these changes will be most acceptable to the provincial authorities.